

Open Report on behalf of the Executive Director Performance and Governance

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| Report to: | Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee |
| Date: | 5 January 2012 |
| Subject: | Proposal for a Scrutiny Review on School Admissions and Exclusions in Lincolnshire |

Summary:

This report sets out a proposal for a scrutiny review on School Admissions and Exclusions in Lincolnshire to be carried out by a Task and Finish Group. The Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider this potential topic for a scrutiny review, and decide whether it wishes to submit the proposal to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee for approval.

Actions Required:

The Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee is requested to:

1. agree whether the School Admissions and Exclusions proposal is a suitable topic for a scrutiny review, taking into account the guidelines;
2. if agreed, to discuss and approve Section 1 of the scoping document for submission to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee for approval;
3. identify any members of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee who may be interested in participating in a potential scrutiny review if the topic is agreed.

1. Background

At the meeting on 2 December 2011, the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee considered concerns relating to admissions policies and exclusions, and in particular how children with special educational needs were included within this. Following a discussion on this issue at the pre-meeting with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, it has been suggested that it could be useful to hold a scrutiny review looking at the wider issues around school admissions and exclusions across all schools in Lincolnshire. A review into these issues could be timely in light of the increasing number of academies in Lincolnshire as a result of the Academies Act 2010, a new School Admission Code which comes into force on 1 February 2012 and the Education Act 2011 which has now been published. All of these national changes will have an impact on how families are supported to apply to a school of their choice and how schools manage pupils who are at risk of exclusion.

Attached at Appendix A is a draft Section 1 of the scoping document for the Committee to discuss and approve for a scrutiny review looking at School Admissions and Exclusions in Lincolnshire. The draft Section 1 details the proposed remit for the review, the benefits of the review and what will be excluded, and the proposed timescale for completion.

Outlined below are the guidelines which the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee will use when deciding whether a proposed topic for a scrutiny review should proceed:

It is important that in-depth reviews are:

- *deliverable within a set timetable*
- *sufficiently focused on a particular aspect of a service*
- *not duplicating other significant review activity*
- *not related to a specific individual grievance or complaint*

Reviews should also, wherever possible:-

- *contribute to the overall objectives of the organisation*
- *reflect community concerns*
- *lead to potential achievable outcomes or improvements for the people of Lincolnshire*

If the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee agrees that School Admissions and Exclusions will be the topic for the next scrutiny review, Section 1 of the scoping document will need to be discussed and, subject to any amendments, approved by the Committee. The purpose of this section is to provide the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee with information to make a decision on whether a scrutiny review could proceed on this topic.

If the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee agrees to the proposed scrutiny review at its meeting on 19 January 2012, then a Task and Finish Group will be established, who will then complete Section 2 of the scoping document. This section will then need to be approved by the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee prior to commencement of the review.

2. Conclusion

The Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee is invited to consider the School Admissions and Exclusions proposal and decide whether it wishes to recommend this topic for its next scrutiny review.

3. Consultation

a) Policy Proofing Actions Required

No policy proofing is required for this report.

4. Appendices

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| These are listed below and attached at the back of the report | |
| Appendix A | Draft Section 1 of Scoping Document on School Admissions and Exclusions in Lincolnshire |

5. Background Papers

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

This report was written by Tracy Johnson, who can be contacted on 01522 552164 or tracy.johnson@lincolnshire.gov.uk.